of military operations did not improve the army's morale. The Tsar commanded no more respect than did the generals suspected of treason.

At that time I was working as an economist and statistician with the military expedition purchasing meat for the armed forces in Siberia and Mongolia, a half-military and half-civilian organization. In general, it used veterinary inspectors as purchasing agents, and a learned veterinarian headed its central office in Irkutsk. My task was to sift and analyze the reports of local agents and prepare surveys of the expedition's operations for the War Ministry and the Duma. Some local reports were almost illiterate, others fairly good, and a few excellent. Supplementing them with information from other sources, I could turn out surveys to the complete satisfaction of the high brass in Petrograd, which had no inkling that a political exile was working in the main office. When Very Important Persons from the Ministry of War were expected to visit our office, its head advised me, "The office will be quite crowded during the next week. You might be more comfortable working at home. If you need anything, just call us up." After the departure of the guests I would get a carload of fresh news, rumors, and gossip from the capital.

News from Petrograd also leaked via the palace of the Governor General and the office of the Governor. Thus the politically interested public in Irkutsk was fairly well informed about the developments on the front, erratic changes within the government, the rise to power of obscure individuals picked up by Rasputin, the rumors of treason and a forthcoming palace revolution, the break between the moderates and rightists in the Duma, and so forth. Most reports were related to Rasputin in one way or another. Between the orgies in expensive night spots and talks on church affairs that were his main pastime, he was giving increasing attention to military operations and foreign policy. The rumors pictured him as the head of a pro-German party at the court, preaching separate peace with the Kaiser as the means of saving the throne. Even now I do not know whether these stories were true, but the role the "mad monk" played in the tragic end of the dynasty has been largely determined by the legend woven around him, the Tsar, and the Tsarina—that the reverses of our armies were due only partly to the ineptitude of the generals but mainly to treason, to Rasputin's conspiring with the Tsarina and perhaps the Tsar himself to make a separate peace with a victorious Germany. No revolutionary propaganda could have done more to undermine the throne than this legend.

Public opinion was deeply impressed by the speech of Miliukov, head of the liberals, in the Duma in which he enumerated the blunders of the government and after each charge asked, "Was this

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